

SwaprakAsha of Brahman

Brahman is swaprakAsha. Now, what exactly is swaprakAsha? It is defined as अवेद्यत्वे सति अपरोक्षव्यवहार-विषयत्व-योग्यत्व-अत्यन्ताभाव-अनधिकरणत्वम्. Here, each and every word is crucial to understand. This lakshaNa is the swarUpa-lakshaNa because it is the very swarUpa of Brahman.

अवेद्यत्व

अवेद्यत्व stands for फल-अव्याप्यत्व. vyApyatva stands for vishayatva. Vishayatva stands for certain swarUpa-sambandha (स्वरूप-सम्बन्ध-विशेष). Laghuchandrika (New ed, pg 41) defines vishayatva as विषयता हि विषयेषु ज्ञानस्य तादम्यम्. Thus, fala-vyApyatva means fala-vishayatva.

Fala is defined in two manners depending on the particular model of pratikarma-vyavasthA being used.

In case jIva is accepted as Avrita-chit (BhAmatI), fala is defined as bhagna-AvaraNA-chit. AvaraNa-bhanga is defined as the destruction of ajnAna-AvaraNa by pramANa-janya-antah-karaNa-vritti. Fala is thus AvaraNa-bhanga-upahita-chit.

In case jIva is accepted as anAvrit-chit (samkshepa shArIraka), and vritti is accepted for chit-uparAga and AvaraNa-abhibhava, fala is defined as chaitanya-pratibimbata-in-pramANa-janya-antah-karaNa-vritti.

Thus, fala is AvaraNa-nAsha-upahita-chit or chaitanya-pratibimbata-in-pramANa-janya-antah-karaNa-vritti.

In nut-shell, advaita-siddhi defines fala-vyapyatva as अयमत्र निष्कर्षः – वृत्तिप्रतिबिम्बितचिज्जन्यातिशययोगित्वं वृत्त्या तत्प्रतिफलितचिता वा अभिव्यक्ताधिष्ठानचिद्विषयत्वं वा फलव्याप्यत्वम्।

Here, चिज्जन्यातिशययोगित्वं chit-janya-atishaya-yogitvam refers to bhagna-AvaraNa-chit-sambandhah.

Fala-vyApyatva = fala-vishayatva = AvaraNa-nAsha-upahit-chit-tAdAtmyatva OR pramANa-janya-antah-karaNa-vritti-pratibimbata-chit-tAdAtmyatva. [BALabodhini pg. 173]

Thus, avedyatva simply means fala-avyApyatva i.e. not being fala-vyApya.

अपरोक्षव्यवहार-विषयत्व-योग्यत्व-अत्यन्ताभाव-अनधिकरणत्वम्

अपरोक्षव्यवहार is explained in Laghuchandrika (pg 770) as तदपरोक्षव्यवहारे ब्रह्मविषयके अपरोक्ष इति शब्दप्रयोगे. Advaita Siddhi also says “नाप्यपरोक्षव्यवहारो दुर्वचः अपरोक्ष इति शब्दप्रयोगस्यैव विवक्षितत्वात्”. Thus, aparoksha-vyavahAra is defined to be the verbal usage "Brahman is aparoksha". The word vyavahAra thus effectively means अभिवदन. AchArya says in advaita-siddhi, व्यवहारपदेनाभिवदनस्य विवक्षितत्वेन. Here, it is noted that vyavahAra is defined in VivaraNa as व्यवहारः अभिज्ञा-अभिवदनम्-उपादानम्-अर्थक्रिया इति चतुर्विधः. Here, **abhijnA** stands for jnAnAtmaka-vyavahAra, **abhivadanam** stands for shabdAtmaka-vyavahAra, **upAdAna** stands for hAna-upAdAna-upekshA-Atmaka-vyavahAra and **arthakriyA** stands for fala-prApti-rUpa-vyavahAra. In simple terms, abhijnA means to know something, abhivadanam means to talk about it, upAdAna means to obtain it and arthakriyA means to get some benefit from it. Thus, the word vyavahAra in aparoksha-vyavahAra, as a part of the definition of swaprakAsha, is nothing but shabdAtmaka-vyavahAra. Hence, aparoksha-vyavahAra means the verbal transaction “Brahman is aparoksha”.

अपरोक्षव्यवहार-विषयत्व is nothing but being the object of the aparoksha-vyavahAra. That is, aparoksha-vyavahAra-vishayatva means being the object of the verbal transaction “Brahman is aparoksha”. This verbal transaction can take place only in jAgrat and swapna. Thus, Brahman has actual अपरोक्षव्यवहार-विषयत्व in jAgrat and swapna. [This dharma is mithyA. What is meant is that there is the appearance of this mithyA dharma in only jAgrat and swapna.]

With respect to अपरोक्षव्यवहार-विषयत्व-योग्यत्व, it should be noted that in sushupti, Brahman does not have the vishayatva of such अपरोक्षव्यवहार because this aparoksha-vyavahAra itself is not possible as no verbal transaction can take place in sushupti. However, Brahman retains the योग्यत्व (capacity) thereof because otherwise such a transaction would not have been possible in jAgrat. As far as jAgrat and swapna are concerned, Brahman has both अपरोक्षव्यवहार-विषयत्व and अपरोक्षव्यवहार-विषयत्व-योग्यत्व therein.

Now, with respect to अपरोक्षव्यवहार-विषयत्व-योग्यत्व-अत्यन्ताभाव-अनधिकरणत्वम्, it should be understood that अपरोक्षव्यवहार-विषयत्व-योग्यत्व is a mithyA dharma. So, it cannot be swarUpa of Brahman. Also, being mithyA dharma, it cannot sustain in moksha. However, अपरोक्षव्यवहार-विषयत्व-योग्यत्व-अत्यन्ताभाव-अनधिकरणत्वम् sustains across jAgrat, swapna, sushupti and moksha. And hence, it is the apt definition of swaprakAsha.

Question: How does it sustain in moksha?

Explanation: If it is said, vAyu has atyanta-abhAva of rUpa i.e. vAyu has adhikaraNatvam of atyanta-abhAva of rUpa, then it means there is absence of rUpa in vAyu in all three periods of time. If even for a second, there is rUpa in vAyu, vAyu will cease to possess the adhikaraNatvam of atyanta-abhAva of rUpa. And hence, vAyu will possess the anadhikaraNatvam of atyanta-abhAva of rUpa.

Now, though there is no अपरोक्षव्यवहार-विषयत्व-योग्यत्व in Brahman during moksha, we cannot say that Brahman is adhikaraNa of atyanta-abhAva of अपरोक्षव्यवहार-विषयत्व-योग्यत्व because during jAgrat, swapna and sushupti, this dharma was pretty much there in Brahman. Hence, as explained in analogy given above, Brahman will possess the anadhikaraNatvam of atyanta-abhAva of अपरोक्षव्यवहार-विषयत्व-योग्यत्व. And since this anadhikaraNatvam is pAramArtika-atyanta-abhAva, it is adhikaraNa-swarUpa i.e. Brahman. Hence, this swaprakAshatva is very swarUpa of Brahman.

Objection: अपरोक्षव्यवहार-विषयत्व-योग्यत्व is a mithyA dharma. Hence, there has to be its atyanta-abhAva in the locus where it is seen i.e. Brahman. Thus, Brahman necessarily, by the very definition of mithyAtva, has the adhikaraNatvam of atyanta-abhAva of अपरोक्षव्यवहार-विषयत्व-योग्यत्व. How can then you say that Brahman has anadhikaraNatvam of अपरोक्षव्यवहार-विषयत्व-योग्यत्व?

Answer: There are two kinds of atyanta-abhAva for a mithyA vastu. First type of atyanta-abhAva is that which is contradictory (virodhI) to the mithyA vastu. It cannot co-exist with that mithyA vastu. Second type of atyanta-abhAva is that which can co-exist with the mithyA vastu. For example, snake is seen in rope. Still, there is an atyanta-abhAva of snake in rope. This atyanta-abhAva of snake in rope is not contradictory to snake. It co-exists with the snake. **Thus, it can be a general rule that the atyanta-abhAva of mithyA vastu in the locus is not contradictory to the mithyA vastu.** Now, here in the definition of swaprakAsha, the word “atyanta-abhAva” stands for “virodhI atyanta-abhAva”. Brahman is certainly the non-locus thereof because it possessed the mithyA dharma in jAgrat, swapna, sushupti. Advaita Siddhi says in this context - न च-त्वन्मते योग्यत्वमपि ब्रह्मणि मिथ्येति तदत्यन्ताभावोऽपि वाच्यः, तथाच कथं तदत्यन्ताभावानधिकरणत्वमिति वाच्यम् ; योग्यत्वविरोध्यत्यन्ताभावस्य विवक्षितत्वात् , स्वाश्रयनिष्ठात्यन्ताभावस्य मिथ्यात्वप्रयोजकस्य स्वाश्रयनिष्ठत्वेनैवाविरोधित्वात्।

Objection: When we say “pot is aparoksha”, then this verbal-usage has the requirement of pot as a vishaya. That is, the verbal transaction is born out of pot-vishayaka-jnAna i.e. pot-vishayak-sphuraNa (jnAna is same as sphuraNa). That is to say, there is a sphuraNa-tAdAtmya of pot i.e. there is a tAdAtmya of pot and chit and pot is required

as vishaya. Similarly, the verbal usage which is the aparoksha-vyavahAra “Brahman is aparoksha”, shall have the requirement of Brahman-vishayaka-sphuraNa i.e. Brahman should be expected as a vishaya. SphuraNa-tAdAtmyam means vishayatvena-apekshitam. Therefore, the condition “avedyatva” shall be contradicted by this aparoksha-vyavahAra because Brahman-vishaya-sphuraNa is a prerequisite.

Answer: While in case of a pot, it is correct to say that the verbal usage “pot is aparoksha” has the requirement of pot as a vishaya, in case of Brahman, it is not correct. This on account of the difference in swabhAva of pot and Brahman. In case of Brahman, Shruti says - yat sAkshAt aparokshAt Brahmam - which states that there is aparoksha of Brahman without there being sphuraNa-tAdAtmya i.e. without the expectation of Brahman as a vishaya. [Page 770 LaghuchandrikA]

Objection: In case of avidyA, antahkaraNa, sukha, dukha, sAkshibhAsya shukti-rUpya etc, there is fala-avyapyatva and also aparoksha-vyavahAra-yogyatA. So, they will also be swaprakAsha?

Answer: No. Because the aparoksha-vyavahAra-yogyatva refers to ajnAna-nivartaka-pramANa-janya-aporoksha-vritti-vishayatvam. [Pg 221 BAlabodhinI]

From Drishyatva prakaraNa

In drishyatva prakaraNa of advaita-siddhi, the issue of swaprakAshatva is discussed. There, **at fifth instance**, drishyatva is defined as स्वव्यवहारे स्वातिरिक्तसंविदपेक्षानियतिरूपं दृश्यत्वं हेतुः. That is to say, drishyatva means mandatory requirement of chaitanya-different-from-oneself in one’s vyavahAra. Now, in the case of Brahman, it is shown that there is no drishyatva. Here, AS says तत्र ब्रह्मणः स्फुरणरूपे व्यवहारे नित्यसिद्धे स्वातिरिक्तसंविदपेक्षा नास्तीति नियतिपदेन व्यभिचारवारणम्।

Here, it is said that the nitya-siddha sphuraNa-rUpa-vyavahAra of Brahman does not have a requirement of chaitanya other than itself, and is hence not drishya.

Now, it is noted that Brahman is covered by avidyA in so far as paripUrNa-Ananda is concerned. It is uncovered with respect to sat and chit. Since, pUrNANanda-rUpaNa, Brahman is covered, there cannot be its nitya-siddha vyavahAra, because it requires ajnAna-nivartaka-akhanDAkARA-vritti, and would hence be with beginning and hence cannot be nitya-siddha.

So, what exactly is this sphuraNa-rupa-vyavahAra of Brahman which is nitya-siddha?

It basically means ब्रह्मरूपस्य आत्मनः चिद्रूपसाक्षिप्रत्यक्षम्। While one can certainly state -- “whether Brahman is” (samshaya), “Brahman certainly is not” (viparyaya), one can never state so about chit-rUpa-sAkshI-AtmA. That is because sAkshI is not a vishaya of ajnAna and samshaya-viparyaya are products of avidyA. Hence, none says - “whether I am”, “Certainly I am not”. [Here, I is used in place of sAkshI on account of adhyAsa of I with sAkshI].

This sAkshI is nothing but ajnAna-vishayatva-abhAva-vishishTa-chaitanya. Thus what we call as nitya-sphuraNa of Brahman is ajnAna-vishayatva-abhAva-vishishTa-chaitanya which is sAkshI. BAlabodhinI says -- अज्ञानविषयत्वविशिष्टचितः साक्षिण एव नित्यस्फुरणरूपत्वात् [pg. 215]. Now, such vyavahAra of Brahman, which is nitya-sphuraNa, requires shuddha chaitanya, but that is not different from sAkshI. And hence, the definition of drishyatva is not satisfied. Further, even though this sphuraNa requires ajnAna on account of being qualified by ajnAna-avishayatva, it does not require another chaitanya (samvit). And hence, drishyatva is not satisfied.

We learn herefrom the following:-

1. The sphuraNa of Brahman, which is eternal, is nothing but sAkshI which is chit which is qualified by ajnAna-vishayatva-abhAva.
2. This vyavahAra of Brahman, namely sphuraNa, is different from the word vyavahAra used in the definition of swaprakAsha by Chitsukhacharya as discussed above, wherein it referred to abhivadana i.e. shabda-prayoga.
3. There is no sphuraNa of Brahman as pUrNAnanda. Rather, it is as sat and chit.

Also, here in drishyatva prakaraNa, **in the sixth instance**, drishyatva is defined as अस्वप्रकाशत्व. However, अस्वप्रकाशत्व is defined not in the classical sense as done by Chitsukhacharya. Rather, it is defined as स्वप्रकाशत्वं हि स्वापरोक्षत्वे स्वातिरिक्तानपेक्षत्वम्, as illustrated by Shruti - यत् साक्षादपरोक्षात् ब्रह्म. It is to be noted that swaprakAshatva does not mean swa-vedyatvam. This is so because there cannot be a sambandha in oneself wherein oneself is the pratiyogI. स्वप्रकाशत्वं न स्ववेद्यत्वं, स्वात्मनि वृत्तिविरोधात्, स्वप्रतियोगिकसम्बन्धस्य स्वस्मिन् असंभवात्।

Thus, it is not that swaprakAsha means that one knows oneself by oneself. It rather means that there is no expectation of others in one's aparoksha. How that aparoksha happens is not the issue here. That need not be discussed. There is an aparoksha and that does not require another entity, that is the import. Here, स्वातिरिक्तानपेक्षत्वम् basically means स्वातिरिक्त-चित्-अनपेक्षत्वम् as discussed in fifth instance above.

This is also supported by Shruti which says -- यत् साक्षात् अपरोक्षात् ब्रह्म । Now, non-Atman is also aparoksha, but not directly. Rather as samvit-karma, meaning as an object of sAkshI. सर्वं वस्तु ज्ञाततयाज्ञाततया च साक्षिचैतन्यस्य विषयः, and also, घटादि संवित्कर्मत्वेनापरोक्षं ब्रह्म तु साक्षादपरोक्षं तदेव प्रत्यगात्मेत्याह ।

Thus, we see that while pratyaksha objects are pratyaksha on account of being objects of samvit (chaitanya), Brahman is directly and immediately pratyaksha. There is no obstruction. This is what is referred to as the nitya-siddha-sphuraNa of sAkshI which is ajnAna-vishayatva-abhAva-vishishTa-chaitanya. However, one should not confuse this aparoksha-vyavahAra of sphuraNa, which is nitya-siddha, with the aparoksha-vyavahAra mentioned in the definition of swarprakAsha (अवेद्यत्वे सति अपरोक्षव्यवहार-विषयत्व-योग्यत्व-अत्यन्ताभाव-अनधिकरणत्वम्). These two aparoksha-vyavahAra are different. While the former is sphuraNa, the latter is abhivadana.

From second mithyAtva vichArah of advaita-siddhi

Advaita Siddhi says - अधिकरणातिरिक्ताभावानभ्युपगमेनोक्तमिथ्यात्वाभावरूपसत्यत्वस्य ब्रह्मस्वरूपाविरोधात् । एतेन - स्वप्रकाशत्वाद्यपि - व्याख्यातम् ; परप्रकाशत्वाभावो हि स्वप्रकाशत्वम्. Thus, basically swaprakAsha is paraprakAshyatva-abhAva. As explained in LaghuchandrikA in second-mithyAtva-hetu vichArah (page 156), this would basically mean - परप्रकाशत्वाभाव-विशिष्ट-तादात्म्य-उपलक्षितत्व which would further mean - परप्रकाशत्वाभावप्रकारक मनोवृत्त्युत्तरं निर्विकल्पकमनोवृत्त्या विषयीकृतत्वम्. Thus, being the swarUpa lakshaNa of Brahman, it would basically take us to nirvikalpaka samAdhi and leave us there.

What is the takeaway?

As a sincere mumukshu, where does this elaborate technical discussion take us? How does it help us in day-to-day meditative living?

If we analyse all experiences, then in addition to “I am eating”, “I am going”, there is a constant seer who is seeing from the behind in the form of “I see that I am eating”, “I see that I am going”. It is the same seer which saw the entire dream state as a movie. The same unconcerned illuminator seer is seeing right now also. That is sAkshI. It is the nonchalant observer. It is this which is called avidyA-upahita-chaitanya. It is shuddha chaitanya alone, just that it is being described from the frame of reference of vyavahAra, i.e. the frame of reference of avidyA. This sAkshI always sees. Whether it is waking or dream or deep sleep, it continually sees. From its own frame of reference, however, there is no avidyA and hence there is no sAkshi-tva. It is shuddha Brahman.

As long as there is the concept of time, there is this dispassionate observer, sAkshI. And there is this nitya-siddha-sphuraNa-of-Brahman named sAKshI. We need nothing apart from itself to know it. Knowing it is being it. Even “I” is not needed to know sAkshI. It itself knows it. That is how this sAkshI is not drishya.

Shuddha Brahman, which is nothing but sAkshI from its own frame of reference, is swaprakAsha. Its aparoksha is by being it. When all vrittis disappear, there is aparoksha of Brahman without any additional factor. That is how Brahman is sAkshAt aparoksha, i.e. swaprakAsha [ब्रह्म साक्षादपरोक्षं स्वप्रकाशम् इत्यर्थः BAlabodhinI pag 218].

Thus, in day-to-day living, when thoughts cannot be kept away, one can choose to identify oneself with this constant seer who is seeing from the behind and not with the restless doer. That helps one cross over the misery of the world. Additionally, since Brahman is sAkshAt and aparoksha, it shines before us as sat and is available through pratyaksha as well. Hence, that attitude can also be taken by mumukshu wherein he sees the Brahman everywhere as the sat [This is from the san-mAtra-pratyaksha discussion in Advaita Siddhi]. And while being in sitting meditation, when thoughts can be ignored, one can dissolve oneself completely to be shuddha Brahman.

Thus, during vyavahAra, one identifies with sAkshI while being in samAdhi, with shuddha Brahman.